



October 13, 2004

Dear Valued Customers and Vendor Partners:

The GSA Automotive Engineering & Commodity Management Division (FFAE) is responsible for the preparation, coordination, issuance and maintenance of the Federal Vehicle Standards 122, 307, 794 and 807. Since 1973, GSA Automotive has sponsored an annual Federal Vehicles Standards Conference to satisfy standards coordination requirements. Over the years it has been observed that fewer and fewer attendees were presenting questions or providing comments about the draft standards. GSA believes that this is due to better preparation by both GSA Automotive and our industry partners, the voluminous nature of the standards (the 1998 version of the vehicle standards contained 250 pages while the 2005 version contains 1000 pages) and the precipitous pace necessary to review the all of standard items in a group environment.

A goal of GSA is to continuously pursue improvements in efficiency and effectiveness. Proposed changes to the standards program are the result of a comprehensive analysis of both the existing processes and policies. In consideration of the historical value of the Federal Vehicle Standards Conference, telephone surveys and/or meetings with agency users, vendors and other interested parties were performed by the FFAE Division Director – Russ Miller, whereby the current processes as well as the proposed processes were discussed. In conclusion; all of the vendors, a significant majority of agency users and all other interested parties surveyed favored GSA's proposed changes to the vehicle standards program including the **discontinuation of the Federal Vehicle Standards Training Conference.**

As a result of the analysis and survey, the following changes to the Federal Vehicles Standards program will be implemented for the 2006 model year:

1. GSA Automotive will create and distribute a program plan that identifies critical elements and scheduled milestones of the entire standards development and coordination program cycle for the Federal Vehicle Standards 122, 307, 794 and 807. Drafts of the plan will be distributed to the core team (GSA associates & vendors) for review and concurrence. GSA Automotive will continue to meet with vendors to determine future products for the next

model year and to review current Federal Vehicle Standards. The draft plan will be distributed by October 31, 2004 and will be finalized by no later than November 15, 2004.

2. GSA Automotive will develop, coordinate, publish and maintain both drafts and finals of the standards exclusively in electronic formats, using either AutoChoice or Microsoft Word. GSA has an internet based tool called AutoStandards, derived from AutoChoice, which is transparent to customer users. AutoStandards requires vendors to enter data of their future products as compared to existing GSA minimums for each standard item. AutoStandards data will then be converted into a web based format and loaded into a separate GSA web site. The drafts and finals of the Federal Standards 122 & 307 will be available on the web in HTML format, in lieu of the PDF format posted in previous years. The HTML format will allow more efficient viewing and printing of items in the standards.

Drafts and finals of the Federal Standards 794 & 807 will be published in MS Word and will be posted on the web for viewing, downloading and printing. GSA Automotive has no plans to convert 794 & 807 to AutoStandards at this time, adequate notice of any changes will be provided.

Draft standards, final standards, amendments and modifications will all be published electronically and posted on the web. Limited copies of the final standards will be published on CD format for user agencies that do not have internet access. **Therefore, GSA will discontinue the printing of the Federal Standards 122, 307, 794 and 807.**

3. GSA Automotive is developing a web based standards coordination system based upon the implementation of electronic publishing methods as described in item 2 above. Draft standards will all be published electronically and posted on a GSA web site. Military agencies, civil agencies, interested non-government activities, potential industry suppliers including all parties on GSA's electronic mailing list will be notified of the posting and opening of the web site. FFAE will provide a brief listing of major changes and /or new items contained in the draft. Instructions will be provided on how to access the web site, how to view the documents and how to submit written comments. The comment submission feature will be open for a period of 45 days.

The coordination system will support the collection and disposition of all submissions. FFAE will perform a preliminary review all submissions and classify the status of each as accepted, rejected or pending prior to them appearing on the web. FFAE explanations will be provided when submitted recommendations or suggestions are rejected. Participants can review the status of any or all submissions in real time 24/7. FFAE will coordinate and resolve essential issues with the appropriate participants and incorporate accepted comments into the final standards. FFAE will provide a final review of all submissions which will be posted on the web site. The final standards will be completed and forwarded to procurement within 30 days after the closing of the comment period. **Therefore, GSA will discontinue sponsoring the Federal Vehicle Standards Training Conference.**

4. GSA will migrate the previous Federal Vehicle Standards Conference's work shop sessions and vendor presentations into the FedFleet Conference. GSA Vehicle Policy Office has confirmed their long term commitment to sponsoring an annual FedFleet Conference. GSA Automotive associates are currently engaged in planning sessions for the 2005 FedFleet Conference. FFAE will sponsor "New Standards Review" work shop sessions. FFAE will assist with special customer agencies or vendor requests for FedFleet in consideration of the discontinuation of the Federal Vehicle Standards Training Conference.

GSA Automotive will be implementing these new processes to support the more efficient and effective use of government resources, to provide the best value to customer agencies and taxpayers and to promote a collaborative philosophy. GSA Automotive's management team including the Assistant Commissioner, the Center Director and the Directors of Procurement, Engineering and Systems/Marketing concur with these new program management processes which will save taxpayers over \$300,000 annually. If you have any questions please contact Mr. Russ Miller at 703-305-6815 or at [russell.miller@gsa.gov](mailto:russell.miller@gsa.gov).

Sincerely,

Robert Blackstone  
Director, GSA Automotive